

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

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INFO USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 3034

USCINCSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, AR

SUBJ: SITUATION IN THE PROVINCES

REF: BA 2691 AND BA 2398

1. SUMMARY: PERONIST SPLIT HAS ENABLED UCR TO TAKE CONTROL OF LOWER CHAMBER OF CORDOBA LEGISLATURE. IT NOW APPEARS LESS CERTAIN THAT GOVERNOR MARTINEZ BACA WILL BE IMPEACHED IN MENDOZA. A NEW DISPUTE HAS BROKEN OUT IN SANTA CRUZ, WHERE MODERATE GOVERNOR AND RIGHT-WING VICE GOVERNOR ARE DEMANDING ONE ANOTHER'S RESIGNATIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. CORDOBA. SITUATION IN CORDOBA LEGISLATURE HAS BECOME EVEN MORE COMPLICATED. ORTHODOX PERONIST DEPUTIES, LED BY MARIO AGODINO, REFUSED TO RECOGNIZE LINO VERDE TORRES AS PRESIDENT OF CHAMBER (SEE BA 2691). FREJULI BLOCK SPLIT AND NEW VOTE WAS DEMANDED. IN NEW VOTE, UCR PLACED ITS OWN MEN IN ALL TOP OFFICES--PRESIDENCY, VICE PRESIDENCY, ETC. RAMON ZABALA, WHO IS NEW PRESIDENT OF LOWER CHAMBER, HAS INDICATED THAT HE WILL CALL STILL ANOTHER ROUND OF ELECTIONS AND STEP ASIDE IF AND WHEN MAJORITY BLOC CAN REUNITE ITSELF. BOTH FREJULI FACTIONS ARE APPEALING TO
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AUTHORITIES IN BUENOS AIRES, BUT SO FAR NO ONE APPEARS TO

BE ANXIOUS TO STEP IN TO FORCE SOLUTION. GOVERNMENT INTERVENTOR BRUNELLO SAYS IT IS PARTY MATTER. PERONIST MOVEMENT INTERVENTOR LONGHI SAYS LEFTIST PERONIST DEPUTIES WILL FACE PARTY DISCIPLINARY ACTION--BUT SINCE THAT CANNOT DEPRIVE THEM OF THEIR SEATS IN LEGISLATURE (UNLESS THEY ARE WILLING TO RESIGN), DISCIPLINARY ACTION WILL NOT SOLVE THE PROBLEM.

3. IMPASSE MEANWHILE LEAVE UCR IN CONTROL OF CHAMBER. UCR SOURCE TOLD EMBOFF FEW DAYS AGO THAT IN PRECENT PARTY MEETING RICARDO BALBIN HAD POINTED TO THIS AS CONFIRMING SOUNDNESS OF HIS POLICY. BY STAYING CLOSE TO GOVT AND PLAYING RESPONSIBLE ROLE, HE REPORTEDLY SAID, UCR STANDS TO PICK UP THE MARBLES WHEN SERIOUS SPLITS RENDER PERONIST MAJORITY INOPERATIVE. SOURCE HIMSELF COMMENTED THAT BALBIN WAS PROBABLY EXAGGERATING FOR HIS OWN PURPOSE THE IMPORTANCE OF CURRENT UCR DOMINANCE OF CORDOBA LEGISLATURE. EMBASSY CONCURS WITH THAT VIEW. BALBIN DOUBTLESS HAS EYE UPON UCR INTERNAL PARTY ELECTIONS COMING UP IN MID MAY. NONETHELESS, IN A GENERAL SENSE IT IS TRUE THAT PERONIST DIVISIONS AND INTER-NECINE STRIFE TEND TO STRENGTHEN THE HAND OF THE UCR.

4. MENDOZA. IMPEACHMENT PROCEEDINGS AGAINST GOVERNOR MARTINEZ BACA CONINUE (SEE BA 2398). IT NOW SEEMS MUCH LESS CERTAIN THAT HE WILL IN FACT BE OUSTED, HOWEVER, PRINCIPALLY BECAUSE THE UCR AND SOME MENDOZA DEMOCRATS SEEM TO BE BACKING AWAY FROM THE IDEA. AS ONE UCR SOURCE IN BUENOS AIRES JOKINGLY PUT IT TI EMBOFF, "OUR PARTY DOESN'T HAVE THE HEART TO OUST A GOVERNOR WHO CRIES". (MARTINEZ BACA BROKE UNDER THE STRAIN WHILE TESTIFYING BEFORE LOWER CHAMBER LAST WEEK AND HAD TO GO INTO RETREAT FOR SEVERAL DAYS TO REGAIN HIS COMPOSURE). MORE PRAGMATIC EXPLANATION, HOWEVER, IS THAT UCR IS COMING TO CONCLUSION IT WOULD RATHER DEAL WITH PLIABLE, EMASCULATED PERONIST GOVERNOR THAN WITH STRONG VICE GOVERNOR FROM RIGHT WING LABOR SECTOR.

5. SANTA CRUZ. CONFLICT SIMILAR TO THAT IN MENDOZA HAS EMERGED IN SOUTHERN PROVINCE OF SANTA CRUZ. GOVERNOR JORGE CEPERNIK REPRESENTS POLITICAL WING OF MOVEMENT AND IS SUPPORTED BY PERONIST YOUTH AND MODERATE PERONIST. VICE
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GOVENOR EULALIO ENCALADA REPRESENTS ORTHODOX LABOR WING. UNLIKE CASE IN MENDOZA, BUENOS AIRES AND SANTA FE, IN WHICH RIGHT WING VICE GOVERNORS HAVE BEEN DEMANDING RESIGNATIONS OF MODERATE OR LEFTIST GOVERNORS, IN THIS CASE GOVERNOR HAS GOTTEN JUMP AND DEMANDED IMMEDIATE RESIGNATION OF HIS DEPUTY. TWO ARE TRADING EPITHETS WITH GREAT VIGOR BUT SO FAR WITHOUT ANY RESOLUTION.
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